

A MASKE

PRESENTED

At Ludlow Castle,

1634:

On Michaelmasse night, before the

RIGHT HONORABLE,

JOHN Earle of Bridgewater, Vicount BRACKLY,
Lord President of WALES, And one of
His MAJESTIES most honorable
Privie Counsell.

*Eheu quid volui misero mihi? floribus austrum
Perditus*

LONDON,

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at the signe of the Three Pidgeons in
Pauls Church-yard. 1637.



TO THE RIGHT

HONORABLE,

JOHN Lord Vicount BRACLY,

Son and heire apparent to the Earle,
of Bridgewater, &c.

MY LORD,

THis Poem, which receiv'd its
first occasion of birth from your
selfe, and others of your noble
familie, and much honour from
your own Person in the performance, now
returns againe to make a finall dedication
of it selfe to you. Although not openly
acknowledg'd by the Author, yet it is a
legitimate off-spring, so lovely, and so
much desired, that the often copying of
it hath tir'd my pen to give my severall
A 2 friends

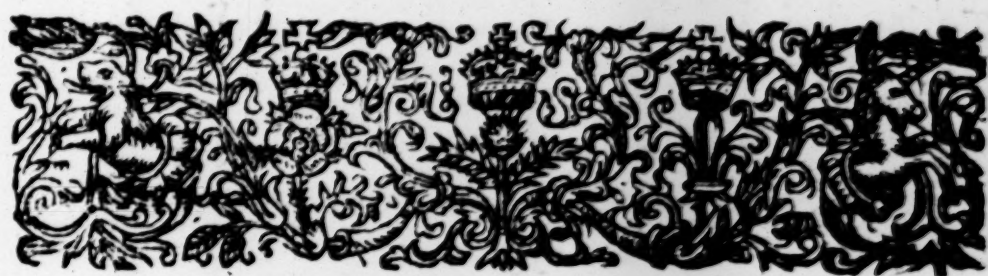
The Epistle Dedicatorie.

*friends satisfaction, and brought me to a
necessitie of producing it to the publick
view; and now to offer it up in all rightfull
devotion to those faire hopes, and rare
Endowments of your much-promising
Youth, which give a full assurance, to all
that know you, of a future excellence.
Live sweet Lord to be the honour of your
Name, and receive this as your owne,
from the hands of him, who hath by many
favours beene long oblig'd to your most
honour'd Parents, and as in this repræ-
sentation your attendant Thyrsis, so now
in all reall expression*

Your faithfull, and most

humble Servant,

H. LAVVES.



A MASKE
PERFORMED BEFORE
the Præsident of WALES
at Ludlow, 1634.

The first Scene discovers a wild
wood.

The attendant Spirit descends or enters,

BEfore the starrie threshold of Ioves Court
My mansion is, where those immortall shapes
Of bright aëreall Spirits live insphear'd
In Regions mild of calme and serene aire,
Above the smoake and stirre of this dim spot
Which men call Earth, and with low-thoughted care
Confin'd, and pester'd in this pin-fold here,
Strive to keepe up a fraile, and feaverish being
Vnmindfull of the crowne that Vertue gives
After this mortall change to her true Servants
Amongst the entron'd gods on Sainted seats.
Yet some there be that by due steps aspire

NO. 11

B

To

To lay their just hands on that golden key
 That ope's the palace of Æternity :
 To such my errand is, and but for such
 I would not soile these pure ambrosial weeds
 With the ranck vapours of this Sin-worne mould.

But to my task. *Neptune* besides the sway
 Of every salt Flood, and each ebbing Streame
 Tooke in ~~my~~ lot 'twixt high, and neather *Iove*
 Imperial rule of all the Sea-girt Iles
 That like to rich, and various gemms inlay
 The unadorned bosome of the Deepe,
 Which he to grace his tributarie gods
 By course commits to severall government
 And gives them leave to weare their Saphire crowns,
 And weild their little tridents, but this Ile
 The greatest, and the best of all the maine
 He quarters to his blu-hair'd deities,
 And all this tract that fronts the falling Sun
 A noble Peere of mickle trust, and power
 Has in his charge, with temper'd awe to guide
 An old, and haughtie Nation proud in Armes :
 Where his faire off-spring nurs't in Princely lore
 Are comming to attend their Fathers state,
 And new-entrusted Scepter, but their way
 Lies through the perplex't paths of this dreare wood,
 The nodding horror of whose shadie brows
 Threats the forlorne and wandring Passinger.
 And here their tender age might suffer perill
 But that by quick command from *Soveraigne Iove*
 I was dispatcht for their defence, and guard,
 And listen why, for I will tell yee now
 What never yet was heard in Tale or Song

From

From old, or moderne Bard in hall, or bowre,
Bacchus that first from out the purple Grape
 Crush't the sweet poyson of mis-used Wine
 After the *Tuscan* Mariners transform'd
 Coasting, the *Tyrrhene* shore, as the winds list'd,
 On *Circes* Iland fell (who knowes not *Circe*
 The daughter of the Sun? whose charmed Cup
 Whoever tasted lost his upright shape,
 And downward fell into a grovling Swine)
 This Nymph that gaz'd upon his clustring locks
 With Iyie berries wreath'd, and his blith youth
 Had by him, ere he parted thence, a Son
 Much like his Father, but his Mother more,
 Whom therefore she brought up and *Comus* nam'd,
 Who ripe, and frolick of his full growne age
 Roaving the *Celtick*, and *Iberian* fields
 At last betakes him to this ominous wood,
 And in thick shelter of black shades imbowr'd
 Excells his Mother at her mightie Art
 Offring to every wearie Travailer
 His orient liquor in a Chrystall glasse
 To quench the drouth of *Phæbus*, which as they tast
 (For most doe tast through fond intemperate thirst)
 Soone as the Potion works, their humane count'nance
 Th'expresse resemblance of the gods is chang'd
 Into some brutish forme of Wolfe, or Beare
 Or Ounce, or Tiger, Hog, or bearded Goat,
 All other parts remaining as they were,
 And they, so perfect in their miserie,
 Not once perceive their foule disfigurement,
 But boast themselves more comely then before
 And all their friends; and native home forget

To roule with pleasure in a sensuall stie.
 Therefore when any favour'd of high *Iove*
 Chances to passe through this adventrous glade,
 Swift as the Sparkle of a glancing Starre
 I shoothe from heav'n to giue him safe convoy,
 As now I doe : but first I must put off
 These my skie robes spun out of *Iris* wooffe,
 And take the weeds and likenesse of a Swaine,
 That to the service of this house belongs,
 Who with his soft Pipe, and smooth-dittied Song,
 Well knows to still the wild winds when they roare,
 And hush the waving woods, nor of lesse faith,
 And in this office of his Mountaine watch,
 Likeliest, and neereest to the present aide
 Of this occasion. But I heare the tread
 Of hatefull steps, I must be viewlesse now.

*Comus enters with a Charming rod in one hand,
 his Glasse in the other, with him a rout of
 Monsters headed like sundry sorts of wilde Beasts,
 but otherwise like Men and Women, their apparell
 glistering, they come in making a riotous and unruly
 noise, with Torches in their hands.*

Comus. The starre that bids the Shepheard fold,
 Now the top of heav'n doth hold,
 And the gilded Carre of Day
 His glowing Axle doth allay,
 In the steepe *Atlantik* streame,
 And the slope Sun his upward beame
 Shoots against the duskie Pole,
 Facing toward the other gole

Of

Of his Chamber in the East.

Meane while welcome Joy, and Feast,

Midnight shout, and revelrie,

Tipfic dance, and Jollitie.

Braid your Locks with rosie Twine,

Dropping odours, dropping Wine.

Rigor now is gone to bed,

And Advice with scrupulous head,

Strict Age, and sower Severitie

With their graue Sawes in slumber lie.

We that are of puer fire,

Immitate the starrie quire,

Who in their nightly watchfull Spheares,

Lead in swift round the Months and Yeares.

The Sounds, and Seas with all their finnie drove,

Now to the Moone in wavering Morrice move,

And on the tawny sands and shelves,

Trip the pert Fairies and the dapper Elves;

By dimpled Brooke, and Fountaine brim,

The Wood-nymphs deckt with daisiestrim,

Their merry wakes, and pastimes keepe,

What hath night to doe with sleepe?

Night hath better sweets to prove,

Venus now wakes, and wakens Love.

Come let us our rights begin

'Tis onely day-light that makes Sin

Which these dun shades will ne're report.

Haile Goddesse of Nocturnall sport

Dark-vaild *Corytte*, t'whom the secret flame

Of mid-night Toches burnes; mysterious Dame

That ne're at call'd, but when the Dragon woome

Of Stygian darknesse spets her thickest gloome

And makes one blot of all the aire,
 Stay thy clowdie *Ebon* chaire,
 Wherein thou rid'st with *Hecat'*, and besfriend
 Vs thy vow'd Priests, till utmost end
 Of all thy dues be done, and none left out
 Eie the blabbing *Easterne* scout
 The nice Morne on th' *Indian* steepe
 From her cabin'd loop hole peepe,
 And to the tel-tale Sun discry
 Our conceal'd Solemnity.
 Come, knit hands, and beate the ground
 In a light fantastick round.

The Measure.

Break off, break off, I feele the different pace
 Of some chaste footing neere about this ground,
 Run to your shrouds, within these Brakes, and Trees,
 Our number may affright: Some Virgin sure
 (For so I can distinguish by mine Art)
 Benighted in these woods. Now to my charmes
 And to my wilie trains, I shall e're long
 Be well stock't with as faire a Heard as graz'd
 About my Mother *Circe*. Thus I hurle
 My dazling Spells into the spungie aire
 Of power to cheate the eye with bleare illusion,
 And give it false presentments, lest the place
 And my quaint habirs breed astonishment,
 And put the Damsel to suspicious flight,
 Which must not be, for that's against my course;
 Under faire prätents of friendly ends,
 And wel plac't words of glozing courtesie
 Laited with reasons not unplaussible

Wind

Wind me into the easie hearted man,
 And hug him into snares; when once her eye
 Hath met the vertue of this Magick dust,
 I shall appeare some harmlesse Villager
 Whom thrift keepes up about his Country gear
 But here she comes, I fairly step aside
 And hearken, if I may, her buisnesse here.

The Ladie enters.

This way the noise was, if mine eare be true
 My best guide now, me thought it was the sound
 Of Riot, and ill manag'd Merriment,
 Such as the jocond Flute, or gamesome Pipe
 Stirs up among the loose unletter'd Hinds
 When for their teeming Flocks, and granges full
 In wanton dance they praise the bounteous Pan,
 And thanke the gods amisse. I should be loath
 To meet the rudenesse, and swill'd insolence
 Of such late Wassailers; yet o where else
 Shall I informe my unacquainted feet
 In the blind mazes of this tangled wood?
 My Brothers when they saw me wearied out
 With this long way, resolving here to lodge.
 Under the spreading favour of these Pines
 Stept as they se'd to the next Thicket side
 To bring me Berries, or such cooling fruit
 As the kind hospitable woods provide.
 They left me then, when the gray-hooded Ev'n
 Like a sad Votarist in Palmers weeds
 Rose from the hindmost wheels of *Phaëbus* waine.
 But where they are, and why they came not back
 Is now the labour of my thoughts, 'tis likeliest

They

They had ingag'd their wandring steps too far,
 And envious darknesse, ere they could returne,
 Had stolne them fromme, else ô theevish Night
 Why shouldst thou, but for some fellonious end
 In thy darke lantern thus close up the Stars,
 That nature hung in Heav'n, and fill'd their lamps
 With everlasting oile to give due light
 To the misled, and lonely Travailer.
 This is the place, as well as I may guesse
 Whence even now the tumult of loud Mirth
 Was rise, and perfect in my listening eare;
 Yet nought but single darknesse doe I find,
 What might this be? a thousand fantasies
 Begin to throng into my memorie
 Of calling shapes, and beckning shadows dire,
 And ayrie tongues, that syllable mens names
 On Sands, and Shoars, and desert Wildernesſes.
 These thoughts may startle well, but not astound
 The vertuous mind, that ever walks attended
 By a strong ſiding champion Conscience. ———
 O welcome pure-ey'd Faith, white-handed Hope
 Thou flittering Angel girt with golden wings,
 And thou unblemish't forme of Chastitie
 I ſee yee viſibly, and now beleeve
 That he, the Supreme good, t'whom all things ill
 Are but as ſlavish officers of vengeance
 Would ſend a glistening Guardian if need were
 To keepe my life, and honour unassail'd.
 Was I deceiv'd, or did a ſable cloud
 Turne forth her ſilver lining on the night? —
 I did not erre, there does a ſables cloud
 Turne forth her ſilver lining on the night

And

(9)

And casts a gleame over this tufted Grove.
I cannot hallow to my Brothers, but
Such noise as I can make to be heard fardest
Ile venter, for my new enliv'nd spirits
Prompt me; and they perhaps are not farre off.

Song.

*Sweet echo, sweetest Nymph that liv'st unseen
Within thy ayrie shell*

*By slow Meander's margent greene,
And in the violet-imbroider'd vale
Where the love-lasse Nightingale
Nightly to thee her sad Song mourneth well.*

*Canst thou not tell me of a gentle Paire
That likest thy Narcissus are?*

*O if thou have
Hid them in some flowrie Cave,
Tell me but where*

*Sweet Queen of Parlie, Daughter of the Sphere,
So maist thou be translated to the skies,
And give resounding grace to all Heav'ns Harmonies.*

Com. Can any mortall mixture of Earths mould
Breath such Divine inchanting ravishment?
Sure something holy lodges in that brest,
And with these raptures moves the vocal aire
To testifie his hidden residence;
How sweetly did they float upon the wings
Of Silence, through the emptie-vaulted night
At every fall smoothing the Raven downe
Of darknesse till she smil'd: I have oft heard

C

My

My mother *Circe* with the Sirens three
 Amidst the flowrie-kirtl'd *Naiades*
 Culling their Potent hearbs, and balefull drugs
 Who as they sung, would take the prison'd soule
 And lap it in *Elysium*, *Scylla* wept,
 And chid her barking waves into attention,
 And fell *Charybdis* murmur'd soft applause:
 Yet they in pleasing slumber lull'd the sense
 And in sweet madnesse rob'd it of it selfe,
 But such a sacred, and home-felt delight,
 Such sober certainty of waking blisse
 I never heard till now. Ile speake to her
 And she shall be my Queene. Haile forreine wonder
 Whom certaine these rough shades did never breed
 Vnlesse the Goddesse that in rurall shrine
 Dwell'st here, with *Pan*, or *Silvan*, by blest Song
 Forbidding every bleake unkindly Fog
 To touch the prosperous growth of this tall wood.

La. Nay gentle Shepherd ill is lost that praise
 That is addrest to unattending Eares,
 Not any boast of skill, but extreame shift
 How to regaine my sever'd companie
 Compell'd me to awake the courteous Echo
 To give me answer from her mossie Couch.

Co. What chance good Ladie hath bereft you thus?

La. Dim darknesse, and this leavie Labyrinth.

Co. Could that divide you from neere-usher

La. They left me weary on a grassie terse. (guides?)

Co. By falshood, or discourtesie, or why?

La. To seeke i'th val'y some coole friendly Spring.

Co. And left your faire side all unguarded Ladie?

La. They were but twain, & purpos'd quick return.

Co.

Co. Perhaps fore-stalling night prevented them.

La. How easie my misfortune is to hit !

Co. Imports their losse, beside the present need ?

La. No lesse then if I should my brothers lose.

Co. Were they of manly prime, or youthful bloom ?

La. As smooth as *Hebe's* their unrazord lips.

Co. Two such I saw, what time the labour'd Oxe
In his loole traces from the furrow came,
And the swink't hedger at his Supper sat;
I saw them under a greene mantling vine
That crawls along the side of yon small hill,
Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots,
Their port was more then humane; as they stood,
I tooke it for a faerie vision

Of some gay creatures of the element
That in the colours of the Rainbow live
And play i'th plighted clouds, I was aw-strooke,
And as I past, I worshipt; if those you seeke
It were a journey like the path to heav'n
To helpe you find them. La. Gentle villager
What readiest way would bring me to that place ?

Co. Due west it rises from this shrubbie point.

La. To find out that good shepheard I suppose
In such a scant allowance of starre light
Would overtask the best land-pilots art
Without the sure guesse of well-practiz'd feet.

Co. I know each lane, and every alley greene
Dingle, or bushie dell of this wild wood,
And every boskie bourn from side to side
My daylie walks and ancient neighbourhood,
And if your stray attendance be yet lodg'd
Or shroud within these limits, I shall know

Ere morrow wake, or the low-roosted lark
 From her thack't palate rowse, if otherwise
 I can conduct you Ladie to a low
 But loyall cottage, where you may be safe
 Till further quest. *Ld.* Shepheard I take thy word,
 And trust thy honest offer'd courtesie,
 Which oft is sooner found in lowly sheds
 With smoakie rafters, then in tapstrie halls,
 And courts of Princes, where it first was nam'd,
 And yet is most p.^ræended: in a place
 Lesse warranted then this, or lesse secure
 I cannot be, that I should feare to change it,
 Eye me blest Providence, and square my triall
 To my proportion'd strength. Shepheard lead on.—

The two Brothers.

Eld bro. Vnmuffle yee faint stars, and thou fair moon
 That wontst to love the travailers benizon
 Stoope thy pale visage through an amber cloud
 And disinherit *Chaos*, that raigns here
 In double night of darknesse, and of shades;
 Or if your influence be quite dumm'd up
 With black usurping mists, some gentle taper
 Though a rush cand'le from the wicker hole
 Of some clay habitation visit us
 With thy long levell'd rule of streaming light
 And thou shalt be our starre of *Arcadie*
 Or *Tyrian Cynosure*. *2 Bro.* Or if our eyes
 Be barr'd that happinesse, might we but heare
 The folded flocks pen'd in their watled cores,
 Or sound of pastoral reed with oaten stops,
 Or whistle from the Lodge, or village cock

Count

Count the night watches to his featherie Dames;
 T'would be some solace yet, some little chearing
 In this close dungeon of innumerable bowes.
 But ô that haplesse virgin our lost sister
 Where may she wander now, whether betake her
 From the chill dew, amongst rude burs and thistles?
 Perhaps some cold banke is her boulder now
 Or 'gainst the rugged barke of some broad Elme
 Leans her unpillow'd head fraught with sad fears.
 What if in wild amazement, and affright
 Or while we speake within the direfull graspe
 Of Savage hunger, or of Savage heat?

Eld: bro. Peace brother, be not over exquisite
 To cast the fashion of uncertaine evils;
 For grant they be so, while they rest unknowne
 What need a man forestall his date of griefe
 And run to meet what he would most avoid?
 Or if they be but false alarms of Feare
 How bitter is such selfe-delusion?
 I doe not thinke my sister so to seeke
 Or so unprincip'l'd in vertues book
 And the sweet peace that goodnesse bosoms ever
 As that the single want of light, and noise
 (Not being in danger, as I trust she is not)
 Could stir the constant mood of her calme thoughts
 And put them into mil-becomming plight.
 Vertue could see to doe what vertue would
 By her owne radiant light, though Sun and Moon
 Were in the flat Sea sunk, and Wifdoms selfe
 Oft seeks to sweet retired Solitude
 Where with her best nurse Contemplation
 She plumes her feathers, and lets grow her wings

That in the various bustle of resort
 Were all to ruff'd , and sometimes impair'd.
 He that has light within his owne cleere brest
 May sit i'th center , and enjoy bright day,
 But he that hides a darke soule , and foule thoughts
 Benighted walks under the mid-day Sun,
 Himselfe is his owne dungeon.

2. *Bro.* 'Tis most true

That musing meditation most affects
 The Pensive secrecie of desert cell
 Farre from the cheerefull haunt of men , and heards,
 And sits as safe as in a Senat house
 For who would rob an Hermit of his weeds
 His few books, or his beades , or maple dish,
 Or doe his gray hairs any violence?
 But beautie like the faire Hesperian tree
 Laden with blooming gold , had need the guard
 Of dragon watch with uninchantèd eye
 To save her blossoms , and defend her fruit
 From the rash hand of bold Incontinence.
 You may as well spread out the unsun'd heaps
 Of misers treasure by an outlaws den
 And tell me it is safe, as bid me hope
 Danger will winke on opportunitie
 And let a single helplesse mayden passe
 Vninjur'd in this wild surrounding wast.
 Of night, or lonelinessse it recks me not
 I feare the dred events that dog them both,
 I lest some ill greeting touch attempt the person
 Of our unowned sister.

Eld. Bro. I doe not brother
 Inferre , as if I thought my sisters state

Secure

Secure without all doubt, or controversie:
 Yet where an equall poise of hope, and feare
 Does arbitrate th'event, my nature is
 That I encline to hope, rather then feare
 And gladly banish squint suspicion.
 My sister is not so defencelesse left
 As you imagine, she has a hidden strength
 Which you remember not.

2. *Fro.* What hidden strength
 Vnlesse the strength of heav'n, if meane that?
Eld. Bro. I meane that too, but yet a hidden strength
 Which if heav'n gave it, may be term'd her owne:
 'Tis chastitie, my brother, chastitie:
 She that has that, is clad in compleat Steele,
 And like a quiver'd nymph with arrowes keene
 May trace huge Forrests, and unharbour'd heaths
 Infamous hills, and sandie perillous wilds
 Where through the sacred rays of chastitie
 No savage fierce, bandite, or mountaineete
 Will dare to soyle her virgin puritie
 Yea there, where very desolation dwells
 By grots, and caverns shag'd with horrid shades
 She may passe on with unblench't majestie
 Be it not done in pride, or in presumption.
 Some say no evill thing that walks by night
 In fog, or fire, by lake, or moorish fen
 Blew meager hag, or stubborne unlayd ghost
 That breaks his magicke chaines at curfeu time
 No goblin, or swart Faërie of the mine
 Has hurtfull power ore true virginity.
 Doe yee be'eeve me yet, or shall I call
 Antiquity from the old schools of Greece

To

To testifie the armes of Chastitie?
 Hence had the huntresse *Dian* her dred bow
 Faire silver-shafted Queene for ever chaste
 Wherewith we tam'd the brinded lionesse
 And spotted mountaine pard, but set at nought
 The frivolous bolt of *Cupid*, gods and men
 Fear'd her sterne frowne, & she was queen oth' woods.
 What was that snakie headed *Gorgon* sheild
 That wise *Minerva* wore, unconquer'd virgin
 Wherewith she freez'd her foes to congeal'd stone?
 But rigid looks of Chast austeritie
 And noble grace that dash't brute violence
 With sudden adoration, and blanke aw.
 So deare to heav'n is faintly chastitie
 That when a soule is found sincerely so,
 A thousand liveried angels lackie her
 Driving farre off each thing of sinne, and guilt,
 And in cleere dreame, and solemne vision
 Tell her of things that no grosse eare can heare,
 Till oft converse with heav'nly habitants
 Begin to cast a beame on th' outward shape
 The unpolluted temple of the mind
 And turnes it by degrees to the souls essence
 Till all bee made immortall; but when lust
 By unchaste looks, loose gestures, and foule talke
 But most by leud, and lavish act of sin
 Lets in defilement to the inward parts,
 The soule growes clotted by contagion,
 Imbodied, and imbrutes, till she quite loose
 The divine propertie of her first being.
 Such are those thick, and gloomie shadows damp
 Oft scene in Charnell vaults, and Sepulchers

Hovering,

Hovering, and sitting by a new made grave
As loath to leave the body that it lov'd,
And link't it selfe by carnall sensualitie
To a degenerate and degraded state.

2 Bro. How charming is divine Philosophie !
Not harsh, and crabbed as dull fools suppose,
But muscicall as is *Apollo's* lute,
And a perpetuall feast of nectar'd sweets
Where no crude surfet reigns. *Eld:bro.* List, list I heare
Some farre off hallow breake the silent aire.

2 Bro. Me thought so too, what should it be ?

Eld:bro. For certaine
Either some one like us night founder'd here,
Or else some neighbour wood man, or at worst
Some roaving robber calling to his fellows.

2 Bro. Heav'n keepe my sister, agen agen and neere,
Best draw, and stand upon our guard.

Eld:bro. Ile hallow,
If he be friendly he comes well, if not
Defence is a good cause, and Heav'n be for us.

The attendant Spirit habited like a shepherd.

That hallow I should know, what are you, speake,
Come not too neere, you fall on iron stakes else.

Spir. What voice is that, my yong Lord? speake agen.

2 Bro. O brother 'tis my father Shepherd sure.

Eld:bro. *Thyrsis?* whose artfull strains have oft de-
The huddling brook to heare his madrigale, (layd
And sweeten'd every muskrose of the dale,
How can'st thou be good Swaine, hath any ram
Slip't from the fold, or yong kid lost his dam,
Or straggling weather the pen't flock forlook,

D

How

7

How couldst thou find this darke sequester'd nook ?

Spir. O my lov'd masters heire, and his next joy
I came not here on such a triviall toy
As a strayd Ewe, or to pursue the stealth
Of pilfering wolfe, not all the fleecie wealth
That doth enrich these downs is worth a thought
To this my errand, and the care it brought.
But o my virgin Ladie where is she,
How chance she is not in your companie ?

Eld:bro. To tell thee sadly shepheard, without blame
Of our neglect, wee lost her as wee came.

Spir. Aye me unhappie then my fears are true.

Eld:bro. What fears good *Thyrsis* ? prethee briefly

Spir. Ile tell you, 'tis not vaine, or fabulous (shew,
(Though so esteem'd by shallow ignorance)
What the sage Poets taught by th'heav'nly Muse
Storied of old in high immortall verse
Of dire *Chimera's* and enchanted Iles
And rifted rocks whose entrance leads to hell,
For such there be, but unbelieve is blind.

Within the navill of this hideous wood
Immur'd in cypresse shades a Sorcerer dwells
Of *Bacchus*, and of *Circe* borne, great *Comus*,
Deepe skill'd in all his mothers witcheries,
And here to every thirstie wanderer
By sic enticement gives his banefull cup
With many murmurs mixt, whose pleasing poison
The visage quite transforms of him that drinks,
And the inglorious likenesse of a beast
Fixes instead, unmoulding reasons mintage
Character'd in the face; this have I learn't
Tending my flocks hard by i'th hilly crofts

That

That brow this bottome glade, whence night by night
 He and his monstrous rout are heard to howle
 Like stabl'd wolves, or tigers at their prey
 Doing abhorred rites to *Hecate*
 In their obscured haunts of inmost bowres.
 Yet have they many baits, and guilefull spells
 T'inveigle, and invite th'unwarie sense
 Of them that passe unweeting by the way.
 This evening late by then the chewing flocks
 Had ta'ne their supper on the savourie herbe
 Of Knot-grass dew-besprent, and were in fold
 I fate me downe to watch upon a bank
 With ivie canopied, and interwove
 With flaunting hony-suckle, and began
 Wrapt in a pleasing fit of melancholy
 To meditate my rural minstrellie
 Till fancie had her fill, but ere a close
 The wonted roare was up amidst the woods,
 And filld the aire with barbarous dissonance
 At which I ceas't, and listen'd them a while
 Till an unusuall stop of sudden silence
 Gave respite to the drowsie frightened steeds
 That draw the litter of close-curtain'd sleepe.
 At last a soft, and solemne breathing sound
 Rose like a steame of rich distill'd Perfumes
 And stole upon the aire, that even Silence
 Was tooke e're she was ware, and wish't she might
 Deny her nature, and be never more
 Still to be so displac't. I was all eare,
 And took in strains that might create a soule
 Vnder the ribs of Death, but ô ere long
 Too well I did perceive it was the voice

Of my most honour'd Lady your deare sister.
 Amaz'd I stood, harrow'd with grieve and feare,
 And o poore haplesse nightingale thought I
 How sweet thou sing'st, how neere the deadly snare !
 Then downe the lawns I ran with headlong hast
 Through paths, and turnings often trod by day
 Till guided by mine eare I found the place
 Where that dam d wilard hid in sly disguise
 (For so by certain signs I knew) had met
 Alreadie, ere my best speed could pævent
 The aidlesse innocent Ladie his with't prey,
 Who gently ask't if he had scene such two
 Supposing him some neighbour villager ;
 Longer I durst not stay, but soone I guess't
 Yee were the two she mean't, with that I sprung
 Into swift flight till I had found you here,
 But farther know I not. 2 Bro. O night and shades
 How are yee joyn'd with hell in triple knot
 Against th'unarmed weaknesse of one virgin
 Alone, and helplesse ! is this the confidence
 You gave me brether ? Eld: bro. Yes, and keep it still,
 Leare on it safely, not a period
 Shall be unsaid for me ; against the threats
 Of malice or of sorcerie, or that power
 Which erring men call Chance, this I hold firme,
 Vertue may be assail'd, but never hurt,
 Surpriz'd by unjust force, but not enthrall'd,
 Yea even that which mischief meant most harme,
 Shall in the happietrial prove most glorie.
 But evill on it selfe shall backe recoyle
 And mixe no more with goodnesse, when at last
 Gather'd like scum, and setl'd to it selfe

It shall bee in eternall restlesse change
 Selfe fed, and selfe consum'd, if this faile.
 The pillar'd firmament is rottenesse,
 And earths base built on stubble. But come let's on
 Against th' opposing will and arme of heav'n
 May never this just sword be lifted up,
 But for that damn'd magician, let him be girt
 With all the greisly legions that troope
 Vnder the sootie flag of *Acheron*,
Harpyies and *Hydra's*, or all the monstrous bugs
 'Twixt *Africa*, and *Inde*, Ile find him out
 And force him to restore his purchase backe
 Or drag him by the curles, and cleave his scalpe
 Downe to the hipps.

Spir. Alas good ventrous youth,
 I love thy courage yet, and bold Emprise,
 But here thy sword can doe thee little stead,
 Farre other armes, and other weapons must
 Be those that quell the might of hellish charms,
 He with his bare wand can unthred thy joynts
 And crumble all thy sinewes.

Eld. Bro. Why prethee shepheard
 How durst thou then thy selfe approach so neere
 As to make this relation?

Spir. Care and utmost shifts
 How to secure the Ladie from surprisall
 Brought to my mind a certaine shepheard lad
 Of small regard to see to, yet well skill'd
 In every vertuous plant, and healing herbe
 That spreads her verdant leafe to th' morning ray,
 He lov'd me well, and oft would beg me sing,
 Which when I did, he on the tender grasse

Would sit, and hearken even to extasie,
 And in requitall ope his leather'n scrip,
 And shew me simples of a thousand names
 Telling their strange, and vigorous faculties,
 Amongst the rest a small unsightly root,
 But of divine effect, he cull'd me out;
 The leafe was darkish, and had prickles on it,
 But in another Countre, as he said,
 Bore a bright golden flowre, but not in this soyle:
 Vnknowne, and like esteem'd, and the dull swayne
 Treads on it dayly with his blouted shoone,
 And yet more med'cinall is it then that *Moly*
 That *Hermes* once to wise *Vlysses* gave,
 He call'd it *Hamony*, and gave it me
 And bad me keepe it as of soveraine use
 'Gainst all enchantments, mildew blast, or damp
 Or gastly furies apparition;
 I purs't it up, but little reck'ning made
 Till now that this extremity compell'd,
 But now I find it true, for by this means
 I knew the foule inchanter though disguis'd,
 Enter'd the very limetwigs of his spells,
 And yet came off, if you have this about you
 (As I will give you when wee goe) you may
 Boldly assault the necromancers hall,
 Where if he be, with dauntlesse hardihood
 And brandish't blade rush on him, breake his glasse,
 And shed the lushious liquor on the ground
 But sease his wand, though he and his curst crew
 Feirce signe of battaile make, and menace high,
 Or like the sons of *Vulcan* vomit smoake,
 Yet will they soone retire, if he but shrinke

Eld:

Eld. Bro. Thyrsis lead on apace Ile follow thee,
And some good angel beare a sheild before us.

The Scene Changes to a stately palace set out with all manner of delictiousnesse, soft musicke, tables spread with all dainties. Comus appears with his rabble, and the Ladie set in an enchanted chaire to whom he offers his glasse, which she puts by, and goes about to rise.

Comus. Nay Ladie sit; if I but wave this wand,
Your nervs are all chain'd up in alablaster,
And you a statue; or as *Daphne* was
Root bound that fled *Apollo*.

La. Foo'e doe not boast,
Thou canst not touch the freedome of my mind
Withall thy charms, although this corporall rind
Thou hast unmanacl'd, while heav'n sees good.

Co. Why are you vext Ladie, why doe you frowne?
Here dwell no frowns, nor anger, from these gates
Sorrow flies farre: see here be all the pleasures
That fancie can beget on youthfull thoughts
When the fresh blood grows lively, and returns
Brisk as the *April* buds in primrose season.
And first behold this cordial iulep here
That flames, and dances in his crySTALL bounds
With spirits of balne, and fragrant syrops mixt.
Not that *Nepenthes* which the wife of *Thone*
In *Aegypt* gave to love borne *Helena*
Is of such power to steepe up joy as this,
To life so friendly, or so coole to thirst.
Why should you be so cruell to your selfe,

And

And to those dainty limms which nature lent
 For gentle usage, and soft delicacie?
 But you invert the cov'nants of her trust,
 And harshly deale like an ill borrower
 With that which you receiv'd on other termes,
 Scorning the unexempt condition,
 By which all mortall frailty must subsist,
 Refreshment after toile, ease after paine,
 That have been tir'd all day without repast,
 And timely rest have wanted, but faire virgin
 This will restore all soone.

La. T'will not false traitor,
 T'will not restore the truth and honestie
 That thou hast banish't from thy tongue with lies,
 Was this the cottage, and the safe abode
 Thou told'st me of? what grim aspects are these,
 These ougly-headed monsters? Mercie guard me!
 Hence with thy brewd inchantments foule deceiver,
 Hast thou betray'd my credulous innocence
 With visor'd falshood, and base forgerie,
 And wouldst thou seek againe to trap me here
 With lickerish baits fit to ensnare a brute?
 Were it a draft for *Iuno* when she banquers
 I would not tast thy treasonous offer; none
 But such as are good men can give good things,
 And that which is not good, is not delicious
 To a wel-govern'd and wise appetite.

Co. O foolishnesse of men! that lend their cares
 To those budge doctors of the *Stoick* furre,
 And fetch their praecepts from the *Cynick* tub,
 Praising the leane, and fallow Abstinence.
 Wherefore did Nature powre her bounties forth

With

With such a full and unwithdrawing hand,
 Covering the earth with odours, fruits, and flocks
 Thronging the seas with spawn innumerable
 But all to please, and sate the curious tast?
 And set to work millions of spinning worms,
 That in their green shops weave the smooth-hair'd silk
 To deck her Sons, and that no corner might
 Be vacant of her plentie, in her owne loynes
 She hutch't th'all worshipt ore, and precious gems
 To store her children with; if all the world
 Should in a pet of temperance feed on Pulse,
 Drink the clear streame, and nothing weare but Freize,
 Th'all-giver would be unthank't, would be unprais'd,
 Not halfe his riches known, and yet despis'd,
 And we should serve him as a grudging master,
 As a penurious niggard of his wealth,
 And live like Natures bastards, not her sons,
 Who would be quite surcharg'd with her own weight,
 And strangl'd with her wast fertilitie; (plumes,
 Th'earth cumber'd, and the wing'd aire dark't with
 The heards would over-inultitude their Lords,
 The sea ore-fraight would swell, and th'unfought dia-
 Would so emblaze the forehead of the Deep, (monds
 And so bestudde with stars that they below
 Would grow inur'd to light, and come at last
 To gaze upon the Sun with shameless brows.
 Lift Ladie be not coy, and be not cosen'd
 With that same vaunted name Virginitie,
 Beautie is natures coine, must not be hoorded,
 But must be currant, and the good thereof
 Consists in mutua'll and partaken bliſſe,
 Vnsavourie in th'injoyment of it selfe

If you let slip time, like a neglected rose
 It withers on the stalke with languish't head.
 Beautie is natures brag, and must be showne
 In courts, at feasts, and high solemnities
 Where most may wonder at the workmanship;
 It is for homely features to keepe home,
 They had their name thence; course complexions
 And cheeks of sorrie graine will serve to ply
 The sampler, and to teize the huswifes wooll.
 What need a vermeil-tinctur'd lip for that
 Love-darting eyes, or tresses like the Morne
 There was another meaning in these gifts?
 Thinke what, and be adviz'd, you are but yong yet.

LA. I had not thought to have unlockt my lips
 In this unhallow'd aire, but that this Jugler
 Would thinke to charme my judgement, as mine eyes
 Obtruding false rules pranckt in reasons garbe.
 I hate when vice can bolt her arguments
 And vertue has no tongue to check her pride:
 Impostor doe not charge most innocent nature
 As if she would her children should be riotous
 With her abundance, she good cateresse
 Means her provision only to the good
 That live according to her sober laws
 And holy dictate of spare Temperance,
 If every just man that now pines with want
 Had but a moderate, and befitting share
 Of that which lewdy-pamper'd Luxurie
 Now heaps upon some few with vast excesse,
 Natures full blessings would be well dispenc't
 In unsuperfluous even proportion,
 And she no whit encomber'd with her store,

And

And then the giver would be better thank't,
 His praise due paid, for swinish gluttony
 Ne're looks to heav'n amidst his gorgeous feast,
 But with belott'd base ingratitude
 Cramms, and blasphem'es his feeder. Shall I goe on?
 Or have I said enough? to him that dares
 Arme his profane tongue with reproachfull words
 Against the Sun-clad power of Chastitie
 Faine would I something say, yet to what end?
 Thou hast nor Eare, nor Soule to apprehend
 The subline notion, and high mysterie
 That must be utter'd to unfold the sage
 And serious doctrine of Virginitie,
 And thou art worthy that thou shouldst not know
 More hapinesse then this thy present lot.
 Enjoy your deere Wit, and gay Rhetorick
 That hath so well beene taught her dazling fence,
 Thou art not fit to heare thy selfe convinc't;
 Yet should I trie, the uncontrouled worth
 Of this pure cause would kindle my rap't spirits
 To such a flame of sacred vehemence,
 That dumb things would be mov'd to sympathize,
 And the brute Earth would lend her nerves, and shake,
 Till all thy magick structures rear'd so high
 Were shatter'd into heaps ore thy false head.

Co. She fables not, I feele that I doe feare
 Her words set off by some superior power;
 And though not mortall, yet a cold shuddring dew
 Dips me all o'er, as when the wrath of Iove
 Speaks thunder, and the chaines of Erebus
 To some of Saturns crew. I must dissemble,
 And try her yet more strongly. Come; no more,

This is meere morall babble, and direct
 Against the canon laws of our foundation,
 I must not suffer this, yet 'tis but the lees
 And setlings of a melancholy blood;
 But this will cure all streight, one sip of this
 Will bathe the drooping spirits in delight
 Beyond the blisse of dreams. Be wise, and tast.—

*The brothers rush in with swords drawne, wrest his
 glasse out of his hand, and breake it against the
 ground; his rout make signe of resistance, but are
 all driven in; the attendant Spirit comes in.*

Spir. What, have you let the false enchanter scape?
 O yee mistooke, yee should have Inatcht his wand
 And bound him fast; without his rod revers't,
 And backward mutters of dissevering power
 Wee cannot free the Ladie that sits here
 In stonie fetters fixt, and motionlesse;
 Yet stay, be not disturb'd, now I bethinke me,
 Some other meanes I have which may be us'd,
 Which once of *Melibaus* old I learnt
 The soothest shepheard that ere pipe't on plains.

There is a gentle nymph not farre from hence
 That with moist curb sways the smooth Severn stream,
Sabrina is her name, a virgin pure,
 Whilome shee was the daughter of *Lochrine*,
 That had the scepter from his father *Brute*.
 She guiltlesse damsell flying the mad pursuit
 Of her enraged stepdam *Guendolen*,
 Commended her faire innocence to the flood
 That stay'd her flight with his crosse-flowing course,
 The

The water Nymphs that in the bottome playd
 Held up their pearled wrists and tooke her in,
 Bearing her strait to aged *Nereus* hall
 Who piteous of her woes read her lanke head,
 And gave her to his daughters to imbathe
 In nectar'd lavers strewd with asphodil,
 And through the porch, and inlet of each sense
 Dropt in ambrosial oyles till she reviv'd,
 And underwent a quicke, immortall change
 Made goddess of the river; still she retaines
 Her maiden gentlenesse, and oft at eve
 Visits the heards along the twilight meadows,
 Helping all urchin blasts, and ill lucke signes
 That the shrewd meddling else delights to make,
 Which she with precious viold liquors heales.
 For which the shepheards at their festivalls
 Caroll her goodnesse lowd in rusticke layes,
 And throw sweet garland wreaths into her streame
 Of pancies, pinks, and gaudie daffadills.
 And, as the old Swaine said, she can unlooke
 The clasping charme, and thaw the numming spell,
 If she be right invok't in warbled Song,
 For maidenhood she loves, and will be swift
 To aid a virgin such as was her selfe
 In hard besetting need, this will I trie
 And adde the power of some adjuring verse.

Song.

Sabrina faire

*Listen where thou art sitting
 Under the glasse, coole, translucent wave,
 In twisted braids of lillies knitting*

*The loose traine of thy amber-dropping haire ;
 Listen for deare honours sake
 Goddesse of the silver lake
 Listen and save.*

*Listen and appeare to us
 In name of great Oceanus,
 By th earth shaling Neptun's mace
 And Tethys grave majesticke pace,
 By hoarie Nereus wrinckled looke,
 And the Carpathian wifards hooke,
 By icarie Tritons winding shell.
 And old sooth saying Clauus spell,
 By Leucothea's lovely hands,
 And her son that rules the strands,
 By Thetis tinsel-flipper d feet ;
 And the songs of Sirens sweet,
 By dead Parthenope's deare tomb,
 And faire Ligea's golden comb,
 Wherewith she sits on diamond rocks
 Sleeking her soft alluring locks,
 By all the Nymphs that nightly dance
 Vpon thy streams with wile glance,
 Rise, rise and heave thy rosie head
 From thy coral-paven bed,
 And bridle in thy headlong wave
 Till thou our summons answerd have.
 Listen and save.*

Sabrina rises attended by water Nymphes and sings.

*By the rusbie fringed banke,
 Where growes the willow and the osier dancke
 My sliding chariot staves,*

Thick

Thicke set with agat, and the azurne sheene
 Of turkkis blew, and Emrould greene
 That in the channell strays,
 Whilst from off the waters sleep
 Thus I set my printlesse feet
 Ore the cowslips velvet head,
 That bends not as I tread,
 Gentle swaine at thy request
 I am here.

Spir. Goddesse deare
 Wee implore thy powerfull hand
 To undoe the charmed band
 Of true virgin here distrest,
 Through the force, and through the wile
 Of unblest inchanter vile.

Sab. Shepheard tis my office best
 To helpe insnared chastitie;
 Brightest Ladie looke on me,
 Thus I sprinckle on thy brest
 Drops that from my fountaine pure
 I have kept of precious cure,
 Thrice upon thy finger tip,
 Thrice upon thy rubied lip,
 Next this marble venom'd seate
 Smear'd with gummes of glutenous heate
 I touch with chaste palmes moist and cold,
 Now the spell hath lost his hold.
 And I must hast ere morning houre
 To waite in *Amphitrite's* bowre.

Sabrina

*Sabrina descends and the Ladie rises out
of her seate.*

Spir. Virgin, daughter of *Lochrine*
Sprung of old *Anchises* line
May thy brimmed waves for this
Their full tribute never misse
From a thousand pettie rills,
That tumble downe the snowie hills:
Summer drouth, or singed aire
Never scorch thy tresses faire,
Nor wet Octobers torrent flood
Thy molten crystall fill with mudde,
May thy billowes rowle a shoare
The beryll, and the golden ore,
May thy loftie head be crown'd
With many a tower, and terrasse round,
And here and there thy banks upon
With groves of myrrhe, and cinnamon.

Come Ladie while heaven lends us grace,
Let us fly this cursed place,
Lest the forcerer us intice
With some other new device.
Not a wast, or needlesse sound
Till we come to holier ground,
I shall be your faithfull guide
Through this gloomie covert wide,
And not many furlongs thence
Is your Fathers residence,
Where this night are met in state
Many a freind to gratulate

His

(33)

His wish't presence, and beside
All the Swains that there abide,
With ligs, and rurall dance resort,
Wee shall catch them at their sport,
And our suddaine comming there
Will double all their mirth, and chere,
Come let us hast the starrs are high
But night fits monarch yet in the mid skie.

*The Scene changes presenting Ludlow towne and the
Presidents Castle, then come in Countrie dancers, af-
ter them the attendant Spirit with the two Brothers
and the Ladie.*

Song.

Spir. Back shepheards, back enough your play,
Till next Sun-shine holiday,
Here be without duck or nod,
Other trippings to be trod
Of lighter toes, and such Court guise
As Mercury did first devise
With the mincing Dryades
On the lawns, and on the leas.

This second Song præsents them
to their father and mother.

Noble Lord, and Lady bright,
I have brought yee new delight,
Here behold so goodly growne.
Three faire branches of your owne,
Heav'n hath timely tri'd their youth,
Their faith, their patience, and their truth,

F

And

*And sent them here through hard assays
 With a crowne of deathlesse Praise,
 To triumph in victorious dance
 O're sensuall Folly, and Intemperance.*

The dances ended, the Spirit Epilogizes.

Spir. To the Ocean now I flie,
 And those happie climes that lie
 Where day never shuts his eye,
 Vp in the broad fields of the skie:
 There I suck the liquid ayre
 All amidst the gardens faire
 Of *Hesperus*, and his daughters three
 That sing about the golden tree,
 Along the crisped shades, and bowres
 Revells the spruce and jocond Spring,
 The Graces, and the rosie-bosom'd Howres
 Thither all their bounties bring,
 That there æternall Summer dwells
 And west winds, with muskie wing
 About the cedar'n alleys fling
Nard, and *Cassia's* balmie smells.
Iris there with humid bow
 Waters the odorous banks that blow
 Flowers of more mingled hew
 Then her pursl'd scarfe can shew,
 And drenches with *Elysian* dew
 (List mortalls, if your cares be true)
 Beds of *Hyacinth*, and roses)
 Where young *Adonis* oft reposes,
 Waxing well of his deepe wound
 In slumber soft, and on the ground

Sadly

Sadly fits th' *Affyrian* Queene ;
 But farre above in spangled sheene
 Celestiall *Cupid* her fam'd son advanc't,
 Holds his deare *Psyche* sweet intranc't
 After her wandring labours long,
 Till free consent the gods among
 Make her his æternall Bride,
 And from her faire unspotted side
 Two blisfull twins are to be borne,
 Youth, and Ioy ; so *Love* hath sworne.

But now my taske is smoothly done,
 I can fly, or I can run
 Quickly to the greene earths end,
 Where the bow'd welkin flow doth bend,
 And from thence can soare as soone
 To the corners of the Moone.

Mortalls that would follow me,
 Love vertue, she alone is free,
 She can teach yee how to clime
 Higher then the Sphærie chime ;
 Or if vertue feeble were
 Heav'n it selfe would stoope to her.

The principall persons in this Maske ; were
 The Lord BRACLY, } The Lady ALICE
 Mr. THOMAS EGERTON, } EGERTON.

The End.

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